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AN HISTORY OF THE INSTANCES OF EXCLUSION, FROM THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

by Mr. Matty

[Price One Shilling.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

HISTORY

OF THE

INSTANCES OF EXCLUSION

FROM THE

ROYAL SOCIETY,

WHICH WERE NOT SUFFERED TO BE ARGUED IN THE COURSE OF THE LATE DEBATES.

WITH STRICTURES ON THE FORMATION OF THE COUNCIL, AND OTHER INSTANCES OF THE DESPOTISM OF SIR JOSEPH BANKS, THE PRESENT PRESIDENT, AND OF HIS INCAPACITY FOR HIS HIGH OFFICE.

BY SOME MEMBERS IN THE MINORITY.

Sir, you are a public man in this Society; your conduct, therefore, muſt be ſubject to reviſion. DR. HORSLEY'S *Speech.*

Still the minority feel no abaſhment. Two and two ever will be four, and the three angles of a triangle ever will be equal to two right angles, whatever majorities Preſidents of Royal Societies may procure to vote the contrary. *Narrative of the Diſſenſions in the Royal Society.*

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ERRATA.

p. 6. for Cooke, read *Cook.*

p. 11. l. 16. for Oxford and Cambridge diſſenters, r. *Oxford and Cambridge* of the *diſſenters.*

p. 13. l. 5. *Conſequence.*

p. 14. Note. for his ſin towards the ſociety, read, *his ſin is towards the ſociety.*

ib. l. 26. for friends to the perſonal diſtinctions of men, in oppoſition to the imaginary ones, read, *for friends to the real diſtinctions of men, in oppoſition to the perſonal ones.*

p. 16. for dignity of ſociety, read *dignity of the ſociety.*

An History of the Inſtances of Excluſion from the Royal Society, which were not ſuffered to be argued in the Courſe of the late Debates;....With Strictures on the Formation of the Council, and other Inſtances of the Deſpotiſm of Sir J. Banks, the preſent Preſident, and of his Incapacity for his high Office.

THOUGH we have certainly much reaſon to be ſatisfied with the ſucceſs of publications, which, whatever the adverſary, to hide his ſhame and mortification, may ſuggeſt, have hitherto remained without an anſwer, ſolely becauſe the facts ſtated in them are unanſwerable; it is, notwithſtanding, with a conſiderable degree of reluctance, that we again appear before the awful tribunal of the public. It is, indeed, no pleaſing thing to be even the innocent cauſes of publiſhing the diſgrace of a learned body; nor do we feel complacency in giving way to a cenſure, ſome ſmall part of which muſt light on thoſe we admire and reſpect. Still, however, as there confeſſedly are circumſtances which neceſſitate a departure from the general rules by which good men direct their conduct, we flatter ourſelves that they apply to our caſe. Whether they do or not, will appear by the following ſhort recapitulation of what has paſſed; a fuller account of which may be met with in the pamphlets, entitled, A Narrative of the Debates and Diſſentions in the Royal Society, and An Appeal to the Fellows of the Royal Society.

On the 11th and 18th of laſt December, we ſtood up in our places in the Society, to procure ſome kind of reparation, for what *we* ſhall always conſider as a moſt *illiberal and unprecedented injuſtice*, done to a moſt reſpectable and worthy Member, our friend. Though we obtained what we then aſked for, to wit, a vote of thanks, and a ſubſequent approbation of conduct; the tone of authority aſſumed by the Preſident, the very unfair manner in which he managed the debate, and the violent attempts he made to ſtop any diſcuſſion whatever, provoked one

of our Members, who had before that time no fixed design of a ſyſtematical oppoſition, to declare, that he had other charges to bring forward, which might poſſibly keep the Society in debate the whole winter. The Preſident, inſtead of anſwering this as, if firm in innocence, he ought to have done, by quitting the chair, challenging his enemies to produce their charges againſt him, and calling upon the Society to hear them, deceived one of his friends ſo far as to make him come to the Society, and demand of it (after what had juſt paſſed!) not only a vote of general approbation, but an *unconditional* promiſe of ſupport. What was natural, took place: The oppoſition, who, ignorant of what was to follow, had never thought the game could be ſo played into their hands, came forward with their charges, and ſet up, amongſt the foremoſt, that of the interpoſitions at elections; but we were immediately ſtopped by a clamour more worthy of a Covent-Garden rabble, than the Fellows of a learned Society; and this clamour, or artifices ſimilar to it, has been repeated, whenever we have endeavoured to gain a hearing to our juſt complaints. What, therefore, *could* not be done, when it ought to have been done, *muſt* be done now, when we ſhould not have wiſhed it to be done. The Preſident has thrown the defenſive part from himſelf upon us, and we are obliged to declare what we have to ſay, that we may no longer paſs for factious and turbulent men. When this debt to ourſelves is paid, then, if no farther outrages ſhall be committed, we both may and will ſit quiet; for, though certainly our contempt for Sir Joſeph Banks's puny pretenſions to the Chair of the Society, ever moſt ſtrong, has been greatly increaſed by his conduct throughout the whole of this affair; and though we firmly believe that he will only plunge the Society deeper and deeper into ridicule and diſgrace, yet if numbers ſhall ſtill continue to think otherwiſe, with numbers we do not mean to carry on an unavailing conteſt. We came forward on what *we* conceived to be the call of duty; we have not haſtily given up a cauſe which *we* thought required only time, and the wearing off of firſt impreſſions, to be ſeen by others, in the ſame light in which we ſee it ourſelves; but if we ſtill ſhall find that nothing is to be done, we certainly feel too much what is due to ourſelves, as well as to the Society, to diſturb either by a fruitleſs purſuit.—Let the experiment be tried, it may not perhaps turn out ſo ill as our fears tell us that it will.

The mode of election of Fellows, which is preſcribed by the ſtatutes of the Royal Society, is the following: The candidate propoſed has a certificate, atteſting his qualifications, ſigned by three or more Members. The certificate, thus ſigned, is read at the public meeting of the Society. After having hung up during

ing twelve meetings in the public room, the candidate is put to the ballot, and if he has two-thirds of the votes of the Members preſent, he is choſen; if not, he is rejected.

The charge we bring againſt Sir Joſeph Banks, is, that, though not entruſted with any ſuch power, either by ſtatute or cuſtom, and very unfit, from his acknowledged violence of temper, and from his incapacity to judge of literary qualifications, in which he is himſelf ſhamefully deficient, to be entruſted with it, he has repeatedly interpoſed, in a clandeſtine manner, to procure rejections of proper candidates *, with the viſible deſign of taking away the privilege of the body at large, and making himſelf the ſole maſter of the admiſſions, in other words, the *Monarch* of the Society.

Before we bring our proofs of the fact, we ſhall examine the juſtifications of it that have been offered; as, if theſe are really well-grounded, no doubt it will be unneceſſary for the reader to give himſelf the trouble to proceed.

Firſt then it has been ſaid, that in influencing elections, the Preſident had only exerciſed a right which every Fellow enjoyed in common with himſelf, but which it particularly *became* him to exerciſe, becauſe from his ſituation he had greater opportunities of being acquainted with the characters of the candidates, than any other Fellow could have; but to this doctrine, did it apply to the complaints, as it will be preſently ſeen it does not, we cannot accede for the following reaſons.

In the firſt place, from what has juſt been ſtated of the mode of election, it muſt appear that there are very few caſes indeed in which it can be ſuppoſed that a Preſident, however omniſcient by nature, or great in connection, can know more of the literary or moral character of a Candidate, than the 456 other Fellows, in whoſe room the certificate hangs up for 12 weeks, and about 200 of whom have opportunities of converſing together upon it. If after ſuch opportunities, the Society is ſtill liable to be impoſed upon, it is much better it ſhould be ſo, than that the negative ſhould be put with ſo much danger into one hand. For when a private Fellow exerciſes his right of aſking balls againſt an improper candidate, he exerciſes it *pro una vice*, probably, from the pureſt motives, and certainly with no danger to the freedom of the Society, whether he ſucceeds or miſcarries; but it is not ſo with the Preſident, for what muſt be the natural conſequence of his repeatedly intereſting himſelf in excluſions? Will it not ſoon be ſeen that his favour is the only

* By taking advantage of his ſituation on the very night of election to ſurpriſe ſuch Fellows, as were ignorant of the caſe, to put in black-balls, or by frightening the Candidate, by the fear of his oppoſition, into taking down the certificate.

paſſport into the Society? Will it not ſoon be underſtood that as thoſe who are excluded are excluded by him, ſo thoſe who are ſuffered to come in come in through his connivance? And will not this create a counter obligation, and a dependance in every new Member, that muſt ſecure voices to the Preſident on the 30th of November, and keep him perpetually in his ſeat, though ever ſo diſagreeable in his adminiſtration? It would certainly be much better, ſuppoſing that thoſe whom we believe to be the wiſeſt, greateſt, and beſt men amongſt us, in other inſtances, are, indeed, grown ſo weak as to ſet their hands to certificates they are aſhamed to ſupport, and that, conſequently, all the guards and checks to improper election, ſuch as the declaration of *perſonal* knowledge, &c. &c. are no checks at all; it would, ſurely, be much more dignified, and much ſafer, rather than to ſuffer a Preſident to run about the room on a night of election, out of breath, it may be, with anger and impatience, ſeducing the ignorant, awing the timid, and deceiving the wiſe, to have recourſe to the old method, and give the Preſident and Council the power of negativing every Candidate propoſed, before his certificate is hung up. In this caſe, at leaſt, ſome ſign of deliberation would be kept up, ſome previous diſcuſſion would take place, and the Candidates, inſtead of being ſacrificed to the caprice of an individual, or the caprice of the junto of an individual, (for to that the power contended for leads) would depend upon men who come forward, and are anſwerable for their deciſions. This previous ballot, was, however, in the year 1730, given up by the Council, it ſhould ſeem upon the ſuggeſtions of the late Lord Hardwicke, who being conſulted on a ſtill farther extent of power intended, cautioned them, in the true ſpirit of a whig lawyer, to have a care how they encroached upon the chartered rights of the Society.* But if the power was taken away from 21 perſons, ſurely it is not fitting that it ſhould be truſted to one, and that one, perhaps, of all others, the moſt improper to have it. For the Preſident, (we do not now ſpeak of Sir Joſeph Banks) is what is commonly called, in this country, a great man; he has thoſe who flatter him, and he has thoſe whom he flatters; he has purpoſes to ſerve, and prejudices to attend to; he lives alſo much with perſons who know nothing of the Society, or its purſuits, or its regulations. Shall ſuch a one then dictate to us whom we are to chuſe? Shall it be to *him* that we reſign the little power that is left? or what is worſe, ſhall it be by him that we ſhall ſuffer ourſelves to be tricked out of this power? Certainly not, if we are conſiſtent philoſophers, or conſiſtent Engliſhmen, if we recollect that there can be no ſuch thing as a *ſmall* encroachment, and that what is not very right, and very fitting,

* See the Journals for 1730.

fitting, is very wrong, and very unfitting, that it muſt have very bad conſequences, as without doubt this muſt, if this preſuming man be not now at leaſt taught to know himſelf, and the reſpectable body he preſides over. Beſides, as has juſt been obſerved, the Preſident is himſelf an elective annual officer, who is never to ſuppoſe he will be re-elected, and that alone militates againſt the idea of giving *him*, of all other poſſible Members, a power, that, in the end, ſecures his re-election.

But, 3dly, it is aſſerted, that other Preſidents have exerciſed the *ſame* power, and that it has not been found fault with. This is abſolutely denied. For if other Preſidents—Preſidents called for, not ſelf-obtruded on the Society, who had ſitten long in their chairs, and were ſurrounded by a ſet of Counſellors, who could bear witneſs to the temperance and propriety of their conduct—have ſometimes fallen upon this method; they never purſued it to the extent of 12 Candidates in four years; nor did their excluſion fall upon ſuch men as Sir Joſeph Banks has excluded, nor was it capricious, nor (what is moſt important of all,) was it carried on in the under-hand clandeſtine manner, in which the late excluſions have been; on the contrary, the gentlemen who ſigned the certificate were applied to to take it down, the Candidate had it intimated to him, that upon great grounds, not for capricious reaſons, it was probable he would be rejected; the matter was diſcuſſed at the Mitre Club: but in the preſent caſes, as will now be ſeen, either theſe ſteps have not been taken at all, or they have been taken on occaſions, of all others, the moſt improper.

Of Mr. Clarke of Mancheſter, the firſt unfortunate Candidate, ſo much has already been ſaid by Dr. Horſley, that we ſhall only obſerve, that he is an *inventor* in mathematicks—that the certificate atteſting his moral character, and the character he bears in his own country, was ſigned by the moſt reſpectable Fellows of the Society in his neighbourhood—that it was farther ſigned by the Aſtronomer Royal, Mr. Wales, and Dr. Hutton, three of the firſt mathematicians in our Society—and that, notwithſtanding this, Sir Joſeph Banks thought proper to go about the room on the night of election, when none of Mr. C's friends could ſuſpect any danger, and aſk votes againſt him. The excuſe now given is, that Mr. Clarke is a ſchool-maſter, and a low man; if by a low man is meant a man unfit, from his habits, to commune with philoſophers, upon philoſophical ſubjects, we ſay that Mr. Clarke's temper and manners make him a fitter man to commune with philoſophers than Sir Joſeph Banks himſelf. Any other acceptation of the word *low*, as well as the objection which ariſes from Mr. Clarke's being a ſchool maſter, we leave to be eſtimated by Foreign Academicians, and the

gentle-

gentlemen amongſt ourſelves, who have not forgotten Horace.

At pueri ludentes, Rex eris aiunt.
Si recte facies,

the only anſwer we conceive that it becomes literary men to give to ſuch an accuſation.

But if Mr. Clarke was a ſchool-maſter, and, therefore, ineligible, what was Major Deſbarres? The ſchool-maſter of Captain Cooke; † whoſe friend, by the fatality which fights againſt men, who ſuffer their paſſions to play where their reaſon only ſhould be heard, Sir Joſeph Banks, contrived to diſgrace nearly in the ſame hour that he was paying deſerved honours to the Captain's memory. Major Deſbarres bears a moſt unblemiſhed private character; he received a regular mathematical education, under the two Bernouillis; the preſent Firſt Lord of the Admiralty, bears witneſs to his abilities as a maritime ſurveyor, and a practical aſtronomer; and the Major ſpeaks ſtill more ſtrongly for himſelf in his arduous, moſt difficult, moſt important, and moſt univerſally well ſpoken of work, entitled the *Atlantic Neptune*, for the uſe of the Royal Navy of Great Britain. Such a man, one would ſuppoſe;—a traveller too into diſtant and remote countries, where he might make uſeful diſcoveries, or ſend uſeful communications of Science,—would be one of the firſt perſons the Royal Society would chuſe to take into their body; it had been their policy always to do ſo, and the gentlemen who ſigned his certificate, Sir Herbert Mackworth, Major Grant, Mr. Jodderel, Dr. Fordyce, and Dr. Richardſon, thought themſelves ſo ſure of their adhering to it, that they deemed it needleſs to attend. What was the conſequence? Major Deſbarres was black-balled. Let Sir Joſeph Banks ſtep forward, and ſay it was not by his whiſpers. We can, and are ready to prove, from very ſtrong and very extraordinary evidence, that nothing but his whiſpers did produce it.

The next perſon black-balled was Mr. Meyrick the army agent, and his certificate was ſigned by Lord Loudoun, Sir William Muſgrave, Sir James Napier, Mr. Peter Crawford, Colonel Duroure, Colonel Calderwood, Alexander Bennet, Eſq. and Doctor William Pitcairne, and he was black-balled by the Preſident aſking votes in the room.*

With

† Captain Cooke received his firſt leſſons of maritime ſurveying from Major Deſbarres.

* In this caſe Mr. Maty was aſked to black-ball, as Mr. Poore was in that of Mr. Clarke, but it is ſuppoſed this influence is not meant to be denied;

With Mr. Meyrick's literary abilities we happen not to be particularly acquainted, (though we have heard good accounts of them,) and, therefore, ſhall ſay nothing of them; his moral character muſt, we preſume, have been reſpectable, from the reſpectable ſignatures atteſting it. If then there was no reaſon why Mr. Meyrick ſhould be a Member of a Society, which neither does nor can profeſs to *reward*, but only to *encourage* and *promote* ſcience, there was certainly no reaſon why he ſhould not; or if there was, it becomes the Preſident to ſhew, why he has encouraged ſo many other Candidates,—every titled man, foreigner or Engliſh, he could pick up, not at all more learned than Mr. Meyrick, if indeed he be not learned, which it is certain the Preſident does not know—to offer themſelves as Candidates to the Society; now this, it is aſſerted, the Preſident cannot ſhew, and therefore, in this inſtance too, he has acted partially and capriciouſly by the Society, and, inſtead of approbation, merits great reprehenſion from us.

Come we now to Dr. Bates's certificate, which, it is preſumed, will find us room for much ſpeculation. Dr. Bates, it ſeems, is a phyſician at Buckingham, of whom Sir Richard Jebb is ſaid to think ſo highly, that he recommends it to all his patients who happen to be within a day's journey of him, to think themſelves as ſafe with the Doctor as they would be with himſelf. The Doctor came to us recommended by Lords Deſpencer and Hamden, by Dr. William Saunders and Mr. Richard Sharp, by Mr. Hemming, Mr. Whitehurſt, and Mr. Felton, names, one ſhould imagine, that would have merited ſome degree of attention, if any names could. But the Preſident was then determined to have no *country phyſicians*.——No country phyſicians, Mr. Preſident! the men, who, by their purſuits, the ſtability of their reſidence, and their wide excurſions into diſtant and obſcure parts of the country, are, without doubt, the moſt likely to be ſerviceable to us! Here would certainly be the place to aſk, who made thee a lawgiver over us? and to explode that ſilly maxim that has long been creeping into the Society, that this or that body of men were too powerful, and ought to be kept down: but we will not interrupt our narrative. The Preſident was determined to have no country phyſicians—and what way did he take to keep them out? Why, becauſe Mr. Hemmings and Mr. Felton were not immediately convinced of the juſtice of this moſt ſagacious determination, and the two *Aſſeſſors** (ſo the two Secretaries were for the

denied; for if it is, no doubt, but General Melville, and 100 other Fellows, will ſtart up and give their teſtimony.

* "You are hard run, Sir Joſeph," ſaid a Gentleman.—"How ſhould it be otherwiſe, when my two *Aſſeſſors* are againſt me? Note, the Aſſeſſors had received no *orders* what to do, 'till they came into the room. Some perſons.

the first time denominated by the President) had had the indiscretion and temerity to engage their votes without going to head quarters for the word, he was obliged to run up and down the room, begging black-balls, a list of 36 of which he afterwards shewed Mr. Felton, as some consolation for the little mortification of having frightened him into taking down the certificate.

May we be allowed here to ask those respectable gentlemen, who, by the pains they have taken to keep this point from being discussed, seem to be so very well satisfied with resigning the right of private judgment, whether they have made up their minds about their names being written down, shewed about the room, and kept by the President? Would they be perfectly easy to meet Dr. Bates with the consciousness that he may perhaps know, that after having voted for ten ordinary Candidates before, and as many since, they have excluded him upon an *ipse dixit*, *ipse voluit*, *ipse cogitavit*, of Sir Joseph Banks?

But how long did this rage against country physicians last?—Was it *bellum internecinum*, as that denounced by our ancestors against the wolves, or is it made up? It lasted just three months; for three months after, Dr. Blackburn, a country physician, at Durham, was chosen.

And here let it not be contended, that the respectable attestations of Dr. Heberden, Dr. Turton, Dr. Simmonds, or Dr. Kaye, saved Dr. Blackburn. No, it was the consciousness that there had been a spirit rouzed, which would not have been laid, if another outrage of the same kind had been soon repeated. Had the signatures of Drs. Heberden, Turton, and Simmonds, saved Dr. Blackburn, the equally respectable signatures of Dr. Warren, Dr. Gisborne, and the two Jebbs, with the additional ones of Lord Hardwicke and Dr. Lort, would probably have saved Mr. Hallifax. Here, on the contrary, the President took a firm and decided part indeed, and, proud of the victory he had obtained, determined to drive over the necks of the slain, and terrify the unconquered into submission. The *two Assessors* had been in opposition, as has been seen, on a former occasion; here, as it happens, only *one* of them proved contumacious, Mr. Maty, who, allowing no man, and last of

persons indeed have thought, that this phrase might be used by the President in a very innocent sense, and that he meant no more by it than the Chancellor does, when he speaks of his Assessor, the Master of the Rolls: But why then use it all? why use the novel expression of *my* Assessors, instead of *the* Secretaries of the Society? The thing speaks for itself to any one who knows Sir Joseph Banks, and the idea he unhappily entertains of the imaginary distinctions of rank and fortune; but it would not have been insisted on, if it had not been to establish the truth of a story which will be told in the next page.

all,

all, Sir J. Banks to preſcribe to him, had moreover, promiſed an old friend *, the moſt amiable man of his time, to vote for his friend, and likewiſe thought it became him to pay ſome deference to the ſignature of a nobleman who had been his father's friend and his own †. Hereupon, the following dialogue took place :—" Mr. Maty, do you know any reaſon why Mr. Hallifax ſhould be a Fellow of this Society ?"—" I know no reaſon, (not meaning that he did not, but intending a ſhort anſwer) I know no reaſon, but that I have promiſed to vote for him." —" Very well, Sir, take notice, this is the ſecond time you are in oppoſition to me."—" In oppoſition to you, Mr. Preſident, I never underſtood, when I became a Secretary of this Society, that my vote was to follow yours"—" Very well, now we underſtand one another; we never underſtood one another before ; but it may come before the Council."——Whether the Preſident meant the Privy Council, or the Cabinet, or the Cabinet in Soho-ſquare, or the Council of Ten at Venice, or whether he only meant to be very angry, is uncertain ; but theſe words he aſſuredly did ſay ‡. Is the Society ſenſible of its danger now ? Does it ſee that if the ſtanding Secretaries are ſo treated, the Foreign Secretary will be ſo treated next ? Then, thoſe Members who wiſh to be in Council, then thoſe who have Candidates to bring forward ? Does the Society ſee this ? Does it feel that an irreſiſtible influence muſt thus be created, and that ſuch an influence may hereafter, by an indiſcreet man, (we will call him only *indiſcreet*) be extended to the ſending up addreſſes, whig or tory, no matter which ; to tranſactions with Foreign Academies, &c. &c. Here, however, we are ſenſible, that it may perhaps be ſaid to us, " amiable and reſpectable as every body muſt allow " Dr. Hallifax's character to be, and diſtinguiſhed as he is " as a claſſical ſcholar; do you really think yourſelves, that an

* Edward Chamberlayne, Eſq. † Earl of Hardwicke.

‡ As the Preſident did not recollect this converſation, at a very critical minute for himſelf, viz. when the oppoſition, (not ſo abſurdly or inconſiſtently as has been ſuppoſed,) endeavoured to obtain a reſolution from the Society, ſtating, that it would be highly indecent for a Preſident to uſe his influence over any officer of the Society, to induce him to black-ball a Candidate, it is proper to eſtabliſh the truth of it by the following conſiderations. Sir Joſeph Banks does not deny that he applied the term Aſſeſſors to the two Secretaries, upon a former occaſion. Why did he apply it at all ? He confeſſes that he made ſome ſuch obſervation as that Mr. Maty and he were always upon different ſides : Why did he make ſuch an obſervation ? Was it delicate, was it juſt ? Does he pretend he has a ſingle claim, except his own idea that Mr. Maty was *his* Secretary and not his fellow-ſervant, to form a judgment which Mr. Maty does not poſſeſs, in an infinitely higher degree ? As to the threat of bringing the matter before Council, Mr. Maty, who came, and told the ſtory (uncontradicted) in his place the Thurſday after the debate, allowed they were words ſpoken in a paſſion (juſt ſuch words as the threats

of

"apothecary, not eminent in any of the purſuits of the Society, "is a proper Member?" Our anſwer to that is, the Preſident muſt certainly think ſo; for, with his own peculiar conſiſtency, he encouraged and admitted Mr. Hurlock, apothecary, of St. Paul's Church-yard, within the ſame year; but we do think, that if an apothecary is happy enough to get a ſufficient number of friends to think ſo, he is as proper a Member as a vice-admiral of the Ruſſian navy, or as a Knight of the Order of Januarius and Malta, or as an Alderman of London, (no diſparagement to Mr. John Wilkes,) or as any other idle gentleman in our motley and variegated liſt; for whatever we ought to be, (which is another queſtion,) we are not an Academy of Sciences, i. e. a receptacle for the Great in Science, but a Society of Gentlemen, of all ranks and profeſſions, all opinions, and, we muſt add, all kinds of learning, (or no-learning) paying 52s. a-year for the encouragement of literature. Though we ought, therefore, certainly to ſet ourſelves ſome limits, as to our Members, they are limits which each of us ought to ſet himſelf, and not to allow to be ſet for him by any other man, who may remove them at his pleaſure. And where, after all, will be the damage, if theſe limits are a little wide? A philoſopher is admitted one Thurſday, a claſſical ſcholar the next; The third, neither a claſſical ſcholar nor a philoſopher; *Scimus, et hanc veniam petimuſque damuſque viciſſim*; it is ſo, we know it, there is a liberty in introducing our friends, which we take and give, by turns: Philoſophy does not loſe much; good-humour and friendſhip get a great deal; and, to cut the matter ſhort, it has always been a cuſtom and a privilege, which we do not ſee why the Society ſhould give up, to a perſon ſo unqualified both by temper and abilities to direct their choice, as Sir Joſeph Banks. That he *is* ſo unqualified, and that his cauſes of excluſion are the moſt frivolous, illiberal, and unfair, that can be, will again appear by conſidering the hiſtory of the next unfortunate Candidate, Dr. Enfield, tutor of the Academy at Warrington, of whoſe exaltation and humiliation, the following is the faithful hiſtory.

A ſet of gentlemen, Fellows of the Royal Society, and others, were dining together at Mr. Shore's, in a large mixed company; Dr. Prieſtley, Mr. Butterworth Bailey, and Mr. Maty, were of the number: Says Dr. Prieſtley to Mr. Maty, "Mr.

of turning him out of his place ſo often, and, till Mr. Maty, long tired out, thought proper to emancipate himſelf, ſo fruitleſsly repeated.)—They were ſo; but what then? The Preſident of the Royal Society ſhould be like Sir Harry Sycamore in the play; he ſhould not put himſelf in a paſſion; or when he finds a propenſity to it riſing, he ſhould ſay his alphabet.———The elected officers of *one of the* (not *the* moſt reſpectable, as Sir J. B. in his idle ſpeech idly calls it) moſt reſpectable literary Societies in Europe, are not to be the victims of Sir Joſeph Banks's paſſions. Give *us* the man that is not paſſion's ſlave!

"Bailey

" Bailey and I wiſh Dr. Enfield to be a Fellow of the Royal " Society; but the times are difficult—What ſay you to it?— " Why, really, Doctor, ſome very ſtrange notions about elec- " tions have been propagated; but as I cannot approve them, " or think they apply to Dr. Enfield, I ſhall be very glad to " ſhew my diſlike to them, by ſupporting him firmly. It " will be objected, that he is a ſchool-maſter; but as that very " illiberal and partial argument can originate only from ſome " perſon notorious for ſtupidity at ſchool (as none ſpeak ill of " univerſities but thoſe who were pointed at there for inſufficien- " cy) and would never, I am perſuaded, be urged againſt ſuch " ſchool-maſters as the maſters of Weſtminſter or Eton, I think, " for the honour of the Society as philoſophers, and, as ſuch, " defenders of the freedom of religious opinion, it ought not to " be ſuffered to weigh againſt one who is at the head of the " Weſtminſter and Eton, or rather the Oxford and Cambridge, of the " Diſſenters: With reſpect to Dr. Enfield's (the Doctor is " certainly an ingenious ethic writer, and a man of high charac- " ter in his profeſſion,) not having diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the " purſuits of the Society, he ſtands exactly on the ſame footing " as ſeveral other Doctors of Divinity, whom we both know, " but will not mention. However, after all I have ſaid, I know " that the things I have mentioned will be urged; and there- " fore, as it does not become me, nor would I, in my ſituation, " ſtand forth in a fruitleſs oppoſition, I deſire you to conſider " the matter, to weigh it well before-hand; and, if Dr. Enfield " will ſtand, I am perſuaded we muſt get the better of the " Preſident; but, above all things, do not ſuffer the certificate " to be taken down."

The ſubſtance of this converſation was repeated in a letter to Dr. Prieſtley; Dr. Prieſtley acceded on the part of his friend, Dr. Enfield: The Doctor's name was hung up; and, to the inexpreſſible ſurpriſe of Mr. Maty, who certainly did mean, if other preſervatives had failed, to have run up one ſide of the room, whilſt the Preſident was running down the other, the certificate was taken down. This certificate was ſigned Houghton, Kippis, Prieſtley, Stewart, Whitehurſt, Butterworth Bailey, Percival, Holles!

The hiſtory of the taking down *ſeems* to be this. The Preſident ſignified to Mr. Wedgewood, that his friend Dr. Enfield muſt tranſmit a paper, and that, if he did not, he ſhould be rejected. But what buſineſs had the Preſident to make any ſtipulation of this kind? Did he make it with 50 other perſons, whoſe election he has not only connived at, but ſupported? All that the oppoſition has ever called for has been equal juſtice; they deſire to have *one* weight and *one* meaſure; they do not ſee any good end that can be anſwered by the violation of all the de-

cencies and cuſtoms formerly obſerved by the Society: eſpecially as one injuſtice connived at, or not puniſhed, almoſt always leads to a greater. Dr. Beerenbrock, a phyſician, the next unfortunate Candidate, a gentleman very well reſpected in his profeſſion, and who had publiſhed ſome medical treatiſes and obſervations, *did* ſend in a paper, (which, by the bye, the Secretary, the proper officer to receive papers, never ſaw) but he had it returned to him within three days of the election, together with this civil meſſage, "that he was ſtill in time to take down his "certificate." The Doctor had too high a ſpirit to ſubmit to this, and he was black-balled, as is well known, by Sir Joſeph Banks's contrivance. In this inſtance, not only the moſt reſpecable domeſtick Members, but almoſt all the foreign ones of any note were inſulted: for the ſignatures to this certificate, were, Pringle, Baker, Saunders, Giſborne, Wright, Simmons, J. Jebb, Beljoioſo, Cigna, Allioneus, Ingenhouz, Pallas, Rogerſon, Cullen, Garthſhore, Beccaria, and Friſi. That the new Preſident's feelings ſhould not have taught him what was due from a man in his ſituation, to the reſpectable ſignature in the front of this liſt, is not ſurprizing to thoſe who know how Sir Joſeph Banks ſpeaks of Sir John Pringle, and how infinitely inferior a Preſident to himſelf, he affects in almoſt every council to think him; but that he ſhould have ſet his puny ſelf againſt ſuch a hoſt of ſuch men is aſtoniſhing, unleſs he had determined, to ſhew the Society once for all, that names ſhould avail nothing, unleſs the name of the Candidate was found in the private regiſters of Soho Square.

Finally, that the Society might be taught to bear all that it could bear, on the 2d of May 1782, Dr. Blane was black-balled, although he had ſent in a paper, and although his certificate was ſigned Lind, Garthſhore, Kippis, Solander, and John Hunter.

One obſervation now preſents itſelf, which is of too great magnitude and importance to be paſſed over. Notwithſtanding the clamour of the 8th of January, which made it impoſſible to lay before the Society the matter that has been now ſtated, the diviſion on the previous queſtion, for thinking the vote of approbation was ill-timed and premature, (i. e. for not approving the Preſident's conduct,) was 59 to 106; but as it appears Dr. Saunders, Mr. Felton, Dr. Turton, Dr. Heberden, Dr. Simmonds, Dr. Warren, Dr. Lort, Sir Richard Jebb, Sir George Baker, Dr. Wright, Dr. Garthſhore, Mr. John Hunter, Dr. Lind, Sir William Muſgrave, Sir James Napier, Dr. William Pitcairne, Colonel Calderwood, (gentlemen who voted with the Preſident on that occaſion,) had been inſulted by the contempt paid to their ſignatures; if, therefore, theſe facts had come out when they ſhould have done, theſe gentlemen, however well diſpoſed, could not have voted approbation; but take their names from the 106, and add

them

them to the 59, and the numbers will be 89 to 76; * a majority it is preſumed too ſmall to have produced any but an ignominious ſucceſs on the main queſtion, on which if the diviſion had been a ſmall one, Sir Joſeph Banks would have been obliged to reſign, in conſquence of his own declaration, for want of that decided majority, without which he declared he would not go on. It was, therefore, a ſtep of high, though dangerous, policy, to prevent, by any means, this matter from being gone into; but the more politick it was, the more the whole tranſaction now calls for the reſentment of the Society, which, at the ſame time, muſt acknowledge that the warmth of oppoſition has been no greater than might well be expected, from perſons ſo treated as we have been under ſuch circumſtances. We were warm in the beginning, becauſe we found ourſelves unfairly oppoſed, when we were conſcious we were in the right; and becauſe we were ſtill more unfairly oppoſed, we have grown ſtill warmer. Surely there is nothing in this extraordinary, or that ſhould make our caſe unfavourably thought of, any more than the ſmall minorities in which we have been found ſince the 8th of January. Whoever knows the nature of mankind will eaſily account for thoſe minorities, as whoever knows us will eaſily believe our poſitive aſſertion of having diſdained to make them greater by other methods than by fair argument. Had *we* thought it fit, and decent to make this a perſonal buſineſs, it will be confeſſed our names are not ſo inconſiderable, nor our perſonal friends ſo few, but we muſt have carried ſome more votes, and have neutralized many, but we diſdained to adopt any ſuch artifices, and never went farther (the proofs exiſt) than to deſire a few friends to literary liberty to be preſent and hear. We truſted to the force of truth upon liberal minds, we truſt to it ſtill, and doubt not but it muſt be victorious. For, as to the Preſident's laſt refuge, and the only cover his friends ever attempted to make him fly to, that the attack upon his interference in elections, is an unfair one, becauſe it makes his defence perſonally dangerous, * who that is uſed to reaſon but ſees that it proves too much? Once allow that any public officer is not to anſwer a charge of injuſtice and illiberality, in the proper tribunal, becauſe the conſequence of his own action may bring himſelf into danger, you allow all that faint-hearted fraudulent tyranny ever can contend for; whereas the true reaſoning is, that, whoever undertakes to exclude a man from any club or ſociety, on the ſcore of character, of courſe, does it at his own riſk; he truſts his ſecret to ears which he has a right to depend upon, (when he has ſuch a right) and muſt

* Add the names of the inſulted abſentees who would have been aſked to come if the bold ſtroke to be ſtruck had been apprehended, and the numbers muſt have been ſtill nearer to an equality.

* See Mr. Anguiſh's ſpeech.

take

take the conſequences,* if either thoſe ears have chinks in them, or he has choſen ears which were not *aſſeſſed* to hear him. At all events, that this is a general defence, ill applied in this particular inſtance, any one will ſee who once more reads the reſpectable names of Mr. Clarke, Major Deſbarres, Mr. Meyrick, Dr. Bates, Mr. Hallifax, Dr. Enfield, Dr. Berenbrock, and Dr. Blane.

If any thing farther could be wanting, after what has been ſaid, to induce the Society, now at length, ſince it has not done it before, to interpoſe, it would be the following very ſtrong conſiderations: to wit, That from the nature of our elections, two remedies remain in the breaſt of the oppoſition, which may be tried, and, probably, with ſucceſs, if all the reſt fail. The one is for the members of it to form into a firm and ſteady phalanx, to ſhut the doors of the Society entirely, and oppoſe all admiſſions whatſoever, till there is full aſſurance given that the outrages now complained of ſhall never be repeated. As the law, which places the power of rejection in the hands of one third only of the company preſent, affords great facility for doing this, ſo it is more than probable, that many, even of the members who have lately voted with the Preſident, would ſee, with pleaſure, any attempt to reſtrain that deluge of ignorance, and idleneſs, which, in the courſe of the preſent Preſidency, has flowed down upon us from the upper parts of the town. Nor, indeed, would it be an improper ſtep if the friends to the perſonal diſtinctions of men, in oppoſition to the imaginary ones, were to ſeize the preſent occaſion of holding out, that they will no longer chuſe any Peers or Privy Counſellors of the three kingdoms, who are ſpiritleſs enough to ſuffer their friends to *ſmuggle* them into the Society by ſurprize, under the cover of the ſtatute, which *allows* but does not (as, perhaps, is commonly thought it does,) *compel them* to be put to the ballot on the night they are firſt propoſed; thus precluding the uſual previous enquiry into their characters and literary qualifications. This ſtatute, which is a diſgrace to the framers of it, might, perhaps, be leſs obnoxious at a time when Peers and Privy Counſellors were fewer, and when the *real* claims of high birth were leſs underſtood; but now that miſtakes in theſe matters are no longer (publicly at leaſt) made with impunity, it is proper that the only literary body in Europe, which knows any thing of the kind, ſhould throw down this monument of the adulation and ſervility of its firſt Founders. And it will eaſily be thrown down, without giving the council the trouble of repealing the ſtatute, (which, however, it ſhould be recommended to it to do,) if a few members will give in

* Which in this caſe cannot be bad, for we do not aſſert that Sir J. B. has excluded any man on the ſcore of moral character, and any other cauſes of excluſion, he was certainly, *quoad*, the candidate, at full liberty to urge, his ſin is towards the Society.

their

their names, and unite to conſider, as unworthy, all ſuch perſons as ſhall ſtill think proper to inſult all the commons, as well as all the learned men of this country, by claiming, on the ſcore of birth only, what any man muſt confeſs to be the ſole due, if not of literary merit, yet of other qualities with which birth or ſtation have nothing to do. To ſuch an aſſociation, therefore, i. e. to the rejection of every Candidate, except perſons of the Royal Family, whoſe certificate does not hang up twelve nights, the Fellows of the Royal Society are here moſt earneſtly invited.

Another remedy of a quite different kind, (and which we only mention to ſhew the danger of not checking Sir Joſeph Banks's uſurpation, as we ſhould be ſorry to ſee Candidates have recourſe to it,) is the following:—Let every Candidate, who wiſhes to be a Member, make a regular canvaſs of the Society, as one gentleman did; his admiſſion will then depend upon perſonal civility, upon common good nature, againſt which it is folly to ſuppoſe Sir Joſeph, who has himſelf ſtretched that ſtring ſo far on a late occaſion, could either contend or weigh. Had he, indeed, appeared to have had a proper ſenſe of the dignity of the Society; had he uniformly rejected improper Candidates; had he not ſhewn ſo ſhameful a partiality to high birth and ſituation, as, amidſt all his profeſſions of attachment to the minutiæ of order, to ſuffer, only five weeks ago, the Earl of Saliſbury and Sir William Younge, to ſit in the room whilſt their election was going forward, thus precluding all poſſible enquiry into their literary qualifications: if it did not appear from what has been ſtated, that he had yielded to favour at one time, and followed private reſentment or caprice, at another; he might have expected that the independant Members would have joined him in preventing ſo improper a mode of getting into the Society; but till he abjures, in a public manner abjures, (the only ſecurity he can give *us*) any interference as Preſident, direct or indirect; 'till he gives unequivocal ſigns of repentance, by ſupporting, with all his ſtrength, the eight Candidates he has uſed his ſtrength to overthrow, it is folly to ſuppoſe, that any gentleman of the Society will any longer ſuffer himſelf, or his friend, to be laughed at and duped by Sir Joſeph Banks: that *he* will not, on the contrary, avail *himſelf* of the facility the intercourſe of this great town affords to thoſe who know how to canvaſs, to bring about, what the Preſident brings about by ſurprize and a ſecret junto. We repeat it, that we do not mean abſolutely to recommend ſuch meaſures, but only mention them to ſhew what the Preſident's conduct unavoidably muſt end in.

But perhaps, after all, we may be reminded, that we ſpeak only of the certificates which Sir Joſeph Banks ought not to have rejected, but omit to mention ſome in which his interference

ference has done good. To this we briefly anſwer, that the good done even in thoſe caſes, the merit of which we know very well, is extremely dubious, that it remains to be proved, that the effect Sir Joſeph Banks's influence produced, would not have been produced in a natural way; and that, if ever ſo much good had been produced, we do not think, the whole caſe being ſtated, and the conſiderations prefixed to this article having been taken in, that the good at all balances the evil. It is true, Sir Joſeph had a certificate withdrawn, the owner of which ſoon after advertiſed *a patent for water-cloſets*—(water-cloſets, by the bye, are parts of mechanics, and very neceſſary parts too, even to philoſophers); but he did not get Dr. Price, the *gold-finder's*, certificate withdrawn; and if he had, ſtill we muſt ever think, the depriving the Society of Major Deſbarres, and Mr. Clark of Mancheſter; the contempt thrown upon the ſtatutable mode of election, preſcribed by our anceſtors, the inſult offered to upwards of fifty reſpectable men, who, as we ſaid above, the Preſident well knew could not have voted approbation, if this matter had been brought forward when it ſhould have been, and, above all, the violences, and diſingenuous artifices, exerciſed in the above caſes of Dr. Bates Mr. Hallifax, and Mr. Deſbarres,* are more than a balance to any accidental good that might ariſe from ſuch unconſtitutional interference.

HITHERTO we have confined ourſelves to matters which, tho' dangerous to the ſafety, only affected the dignity of Society in *this* country; but we come now to the conſideration of a buſineſs, which tends to leſſen, degrade, and ruin us, in the ſight of the whole European world of letters—We mean, the formation of every Council ſince Sir Joſeph's preſidency, but particularly, of the laſt Council. The Council of the Royal Society is, at the ſame time, as is well known, its Committee of papers, that part of the body who is to decide upon the merit of diſcoveries, either foreign or domeſtic, and to hold the equal balance between its own laborious Members. The nomination of this body is in the Society at large, who, however, in a very evil hour, of later years, have in fact left it to their Preſident, evidently under an implied, though not expreſſed, covenant, that he would take care that there ſhould always be in it a proper number of men of ſcience in each branch, fit to do the work for which they are deputed. With this ſecurity, we riſe from our beds on the foggy 30th of November, come and make our bows to the Chair, and throw our liſts into the balotting boxes without ever looking at them. But what liſts have we put into the

* By giving out that he was the writer of periodical publications.

boxes

boxes this year! *Aruſpex aruſpicem*; Let the Committee of Papers conſider their own aſſembly, when they meet next to deliberate upon the papers before them, and then let them eſtimate what degree of gratitude they, or the Society, owe to the Preſident, for bringing them into this ſituation. And here let not malignity exult, as though in our zeal we cared not on what ſubjects we touched, or how many reſpectable characters we attacked; the gentlemen are public men, and too well acquainted with the condition of ſuch men in this country to be offended at a diſcuſſion of their public characters, when any part of the public intereſt is at ſtake; but beſides, unqualified though we muſt maintain them to be, when thus joined together in one body, it follows not that we cannot allow great and diſtinguiſhed merit to many, indeed to all the individuals. We know, and repeat it with as much pleaſure as the reader reads it, that one honourable member, dear to the Society, as well for his amiable qualities, as for his Hiſtory of Veſuvius, is well qualified to decide in ſeveral branches of Natural Hiſtory *; we are ſenſible, that fame of a more than ordinary proficiency in the particular ſtudies of the Society has followed an amiable young nobleman † from the place where Newton begun his illuſtrious career‡, to that where he concluded it; we gladly confeſs that another learned member ‖ brings us all that fund of honeſty, all that attachment to the buſineſs he undertakes, all that ardour for uſeful knowledge, and that proficiency in it, which render him the boaſt of every learned as well as every humane ſociety he belongs to in this country, and he belongs to many; in a word, we know that, in his ſingle capacity, much good of every man is to be ſpoken, and that no evil is to be ſpoken of any; that all are wiſe and learned, and moſt honourable on all accounts—honourable indeed, they have ſhewn themſelves, even amidſt all thoſe little irregularities to which the defence of a firſt opinion, too eagerly taken up, has carried them—but ſtill what is this to profeſſional ſkill? to that accuracy of ſcience which ariſes from having been employed only about one object? to that acquaintance, in ſhort, with the *minutiæ*, and if we may ſo call them, the fineſſes of thoſe dry ſtudies which moſtly occupy us in the times of our meeting, and without which no man is fit to judge of philoſophical inventions? Where in a word are the mechanics? Where are the profeſſed chemiſts? Where are the mathematicians? Where are the practical aſtronomers?—What not a ſingle one of either? What not a practical aſtronomer in the council of the Royal Society of London, inſtituted for the promotion of natural knowledge, at a time when the Heavens, almoſt ſhut up ſince

* Sir W. Hamilton. † Lord Spencer. ‡ *Pruned his infant wing*, as a great writer calls it. ‖ Iſaac Hawkins Brown, Eſq.

the days of the immortal Newton, ſeem to be again opened by Mr. Herſchel to the curioſity of mankind? Is it poſſible! and do we affect (for affect it we muſt) to be ſeriouſly uneaſy, becauſe we ſuſpect that ſome foreigners may not have had anſwers in form to their letters of form, while this is our ſhame and this our diſgrace? And let it not be ſaid that this evil, great as it is, may be remedied, and that the council have the power of calling into their committee any member to aſſiſt them; we know that they have this power, and we know that they muſt uſe it this year; but what is this irregular, temporary, and partial mode of proceeding to the regular nomination of a ſtanding body known, and, in ſome degree at leaſt, reſponſible for its proceedings? Such a body we expected and had a right to expect, from our preſident; we truſted him to procure it us; he has abuſed that truſt, and is anſwerable not only to us, but to all Europe for the abuſe.

He is ſo much the more anſwerable, becauſe it will immediately be made appear that the diſtreſs aroſe not from accident. The aſtronomer royal was diſmiſſed ſuddenly from the council; why he was diſmiſſed, makes no part of the preſent enquiry; the preſident, indeed, told General Rainsford, in the preſence of three or four gentlemen, on the 30th of November, that it was to haſten the publication of the Greenwich Obſervations; it might be ſo; if it was, never was vigorous meaſure of government attended with more complete ſucceſs; for the obſervations were ready for preſs within the month, as, indeed, (which certainly the good preſident did not recollect) the aſtronomer had promiſed that they ſhould:— But, once more, be this as it may, the aſtronomer-royal was diſmiſſed; he might very conſtitutionally be diſmiſſed, perhaps there may be ſome propriety in his being ſometimes left out of our council, as we are viſitors of the Royal Obſervatory; but when he had been diſmiſſed, why was not another aſtronomer put in his place? What had Mr. Wales done, or Mr. Wollaſton, or Sir G. Shuckburg, or Sir H. Englefield, or Mr. Herſchel himſelf? In other ſciences, what has Mr. Smeaton done (he comes to town once a year)? What had Mr. Cavallo done? What had Dr. Horſley done? This laſt gentleman may, indeed, be ſuppoſed to have *diſqualified* ſince, but at that time.... Not a chemiſt, not a mechanic, not a mathematician, not a practical aſtronomer in our councils! What then is to become of the papers, home papers we mean? (foreign papers we henceforward ſhall have none), and by whom are they to be tried? Formerly there was ſome kind of eſtabliſhed order in the Society; the learned man gave his papers to the ſecretary, the ſecretary

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in due time produced them to a body of men that was known, and each of whom was reſponſible for the ſentence he gave. The Preſident now takes them, the Preſident changes the order of reading them (not in particular caſes, as alone he is permitted by exception in the ſtatutes, but every Thurſday) the Preſident may, if he pleaſes, hand them about to a junto (he muſt hand them about to ſomebody) for an opinion, who may, for aught he knows, be the enemies or the rivals of the writer, or whom, at leaſt, he does not know that the writer would either chooſe for his judges, or like to communicate his paper to. Surely, whoever ſees not in this, as well as in the imperial ludi-magiſterial knock with the hammer, in the dictatorial rebuff, which Meſſrs. Bridgen and Brereton received in very early days, for ſpeaking modeſtly about the alteration in the hour of meeting; in the affected introduction of great people into the Society; in diſtinctions of rank upon every occaſion; in the nomination of Dr. Dryander to take the catalogue of the books, when there was a Librarian in the houſe, who having given ſecurity, might have refuſed a ſtranger admittance; and when, if there had been no librarian, a Preſident, duly diſdainful of jobs, might have propoſed the buſineſs to ſome of the Fellows; whoever, in all this, as well as in the *then* avowed and *not yet* relinquiſhed plan of laſt year, to ruin a whole family, by diſmiſſing our Librarian and Clerk, unheard and unadmoniſhed, for a *few* venial and many imaginary faults*, ſees not a fixed and ſettled plan of deſpotiſm, not leſs violent in the means than trifling in the object, muſt have been born blind, or have made himſelf ſo.

Does there remain a doubt in the mind of any man? We will ſtate one more anecdote. After all that has been now paſſing for nine months in the Society, it was not ſix weeks ago, that in the preſence of ten of the moſt reſpectable members of the Council, the Preſident told Mr. Maty, when he roſe in his place as Counſellor, to give an opinion, which happened not to be exactly that of the Preſident, that he was always in oppoſition to the Preſident, and that it was ſufficient that the Preſident ſhould propoſe a thing, for Mr. Maty to oppoſe it. Is it plain now of what malady the Preſident is ſick, and how incurable and inveterate the diſorder is, ſince all the medicine given has had no effect?

* This matter went ſo far, that the ſeveral members of the Council were applied to in form to protect their Clerk, and that many of them, the Dean of Chriſt Church amongſt others, Dr. Maſkelyne, Mr. Harriſon, and Dr. Hoare attended, or declared themſelves ready to attend Council for that purpoſe: But the Preſident relinquiſhed his idea for that time, as the year before he had relinquiſhed the idea of propoſing another Secretary, in lieu of Mr. Maty, in whoſe poſſeſſion *written* evidences of this laſt fact exiſt.

Does not it ſtrike every man who reads, that Sir Joſeph Banks cannot give up the idea of being the *Governor* and *Director* of a body, whoſe cuſtom it never has been to chooſe a Governor or Director? But ought he, or ought he not, to give this idea up? Ye hitherto faithful ſupporters of authority, will ye publicly maintain, and can ye maintain, that the conſtitution of the Society will be preſerved, if he keeps it? Will ye ſay, that by the conſtitution of the Society, by the Royal charters which define its conſtitution, the annual election of a council is meant to be a mere mockery of an election, and that the Preſident of the Royal Society has greater powers than the Head of a Houſe at Oxford or Cambridge? If ye cannot ſay this, and (if ye can, ye take very difficult ground indeed) be conſiſtent, and have the ſpirit to do ſomething effectual to prevent abuſe. Either chooſe a new Preſident on next St. Andrew's day, which we muſt think will be the beſt ſtep you can purſue, or, if that be going farther than ye think for the good of the Society, unite in putting an effectual reſtraint upon the preſent one; give him *Ephori*; chooſe two or three, it matters not what two or three, but chooſe two or three profeſſed members of the oppoſition into your councils. Do ye ſtart? Be aſſured, that this is the only way ye can take, either of checking him or evincing your own fairneſs. As there can be no pretence whatever for the twenty members of a Council, deputed jointly to do the duty of the body, being all perſons who think with the Preſident upon all ſubjects, and as nothing can be ſo illiberal or ſo unworthy of ye as to ſuppoſe that the gentlemen who have oppoſed him now from public principle, will thwart and oppoſe him when he ſhall happen to be right, from motives of peeviſhneſs or revenge; ſo, depend upon it, you can only give the Society reſt by this means; otherwiſe, think of what palliatives you may, introduce as many moderate men as you pleaſe, heap together as many learned ones as you can, things will ſoon return again to the ſame ſtate in which they now are. The Preſident is incurably ſick with the luſt of domination, he imagines himſelf born to rule (Good God! how little do men know themſelves!); and cannot perceive that he has neither the intellectual nor the moral qualities of a ruler. Honeſty he poſſeſſes—the honeſty of a private man. Of the honeſty of a governor, for which modern languages have no name, the Greeks called it ἐπιείκεια, he is deſtitute.—His attachment to the intereſts of the Society may be warm and ſincere; but while his underſtanding of its intereſts is defective, the miſchief which is daily done by his miſmanagement muſt be increaſed proportionably to his zeal for your ſervice. Put, therefore, about this well-intentioned and ill-adviſed Preſident, thoſe who profeſſedly diſallow his omniſcience and divine right to govern wrong, thoſe who have different views for the Society from his, thoſe who will not be held in from ſpeaking by

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falſe timidity or partial regards. This may preſerve peace, by preventing the commiſſion of freſh outrages, but nothing elſe can. If this, or ſomething of the kind be not ſoon done, you are to expect the erection of a new Society, a real Academy of Sciences, in the country. This will be weak at firſt, perhaps, and for ſome years the object of your mirth and deriſion; but, as it will be founded upon the true principles now acknowledged all over Europe, and conducted by men who know what is required to make ſuch an undertaking proſper, it will emerge within a ſhort time, paſs you a ſhort time after, and, at length, leave you the mortification of being only the ſecond ſcientific body in the kingdom. It behoves, therefore, thoſe who ſeriouſly wiſh well to the Society, firſt to tear from their Preſident the uſurped and ſo-much-abuſed power of making the houſe liſt, and then to conſider very ſeriouſly how they ſhall form it themſelves.

Not to take up the time of the public in vain, we would willingly paſs by the other charges, which are of a more trifling nature, though by no means of ſo trifling a nature as may be conceived. There is one, however, that muſt be taken ſome notice of, becauſe the arrow has been picked up by the enemy, and may, it is ſuſpected, be thrown back again, dipped in a little venom. Amongſt the complaints which Dr. Horſley on the ſecond night of debate, ſaid he would bring forward, there was one which reſpected the improvident ſquandering of the public money; in this it has been ſuppoſed, that the Doctor meant to point at a ſilly ariſtocratic innovation intended by the introduction of very ſumptuous and expenſive chairs into the Society's rooms, for the reception of great perſonages. It is admitted that this was one, though not the only object the Doctor had in view. Now, in anſwer to this complaint, it has been alledged by the other ſide, that the purchaſe of theſe chairs was not a propoſition which came from the Preſident, but from one of the Vice Preſidents; and that it was firſt ſuggeſted by an idea that the Patron and our gracious Queen ſhould have Royal chairs to repoſe in when they honoured their own apartments in Somerſet Houſe with their preſence. Of any intended diſreſpect to thoſe Royal perſonages, the preſent oppoſition can certainly not be ſuſpected, nor will it be credited of them when it is known, as it is pretty well known, who they are. But the chairs or thrones, we aver, had certainly retroſpective, as well as proſpective views; and theſe, it is contended, were ſtrongly ſupported by the Preſident, and do intereſt the body at large.—They were certainly intended to be the diſtinguiſhing ſeats of ſuch Royal perſonages as the Margrave of Anſpach, when they do the Society the honour to viſit them; not to ſee the Houſe, but at their ordinary meetings. Now, againſt this, it is apprehended, the objections are by no means ſo abſurd and frivolous

volous as the public may have been taught to think, and may, for aught we know, invidiouſly be ſuggeſted in *another place*. As to the intention of levelling principalities and powers, of which ſome of us are ſo ridiculouſly and ſenſeleſly accuſed on this occaſion; nothing of that tendency can be attributed to our meaſures: For whatever may be this man's or that man's opinion of the utility of honorary diſtinctions, and the reſpect due to them (and where ſhall opinions of that kind be free, if not among the members of a Philoſophical Aſſembly?) it is, we think, pretty well agreed on, that every man leaves his rank at the door of the Royal Society, except with regard to the bare object of civility, juſt as every man leaves his ſword at the door of ſome other peaceable aſſemblies. The queſtion, therefore, is not whether any Margrave, or Bargrave, or Palſgrave, is great enough to have particular reſpect ſhewn him; but whether it is more manly for him to be contented with the attention that was ſhewn to Peter the Great the great civilizer of Ruſſia, to the preſent King of Denmark, the preſent King of Poland, &c. when they viſited the ſociety, than to have innovations made on his acccount. Now it is apprehended there are ſome very good reaſons why he ſhould be contented with theſe civilities. In the firſt place, if he is a man of ſenſe, or has had a tolerable good tutor, he will be taught, what we conceive to be very good morality, even that of king Solomon, and no levelling doctrine at all, that it becomes crowned heads to bow to ſcience, and not ſcience to bow to crowned heads. Secondly, he will ſee, that though he ſits in ever ſo fine a chair, he will ſtill be but the ſecond man in the room, for the Preſident muſt ſit above him, covered too, whilſt he ſits uncovered, unleſs it is indeed *appointed, conſtituted*, and *ordained* otherwiſe by a new ſtatute*.

* Since this article has been drawn up, Mr. Maty has written to Paris, to know what the cuſtom of the academies there may be, with regard to the diſtinctions paid to great perſonages. The following is the anſwer he received.

"L'Académie Francoiſe, mon cher confrère va recevoir à la deſcente du "caroſſe les Souverains étrangers qui lui font l'honneur de la viſiter et "leur offre le fauteuil du Directeur. L'Empereur l'a refuſé abſolument, "comme nous avons vû à l'académie des Belles Lettres le Grand Duc "& la Grande Ducheſſe de Ruſſie refuſer abſolument les fauteuils qui *les* "*auroient diſtingués* et vouloir être aſſis ſur nos chaiſes. A l'Académie "Francoiſe ainſi qu'à l'académie des Belles-Lettres les perſonnes de la "ſuite occupent les ſiéges placés derriere les fauteuils des académiciens, "ou chez nous derrière les ſiéges des officiers."

No doubt the Kings of Bolabola and O-why-hee are the only monarchs in the world who would dream of introducing the "ceremonies that to great ones 'long,'" into a literary aſſembly. Not again that we lay great ſtreſs on ſuch matters, one way or other; but they ſerve to ſhew the ſpirit by which the Preſident is governed, and the ſplendid improvements he is likely to introduce.

But,

But, beſides theſe conſiderations, which are to the Preſident and his *Aſſeſſors*, there is one which immediately concerns the Society, and that is, that if the *ducal chairs* are once to be beſtowed, we ſhall be involved in endleſs *unprofitable* debates, about recommending to Council, on whom they ſhall be beſtowed. The republican, when he hears they are to be given to Sovereign authority, will aſk them for the ſenators of Lucca and San Marino; or if he is not a very learned republican, for *the* ſenator of Rome; ſomebody elſe will think that Meer Catabaw, a Cherokee King, or the well-educated Omiah, now perhaps a powerful Chief, in his own country, ought to have them; and a third party will be of opinion, that General Paoli, ſometime Protector, tho' never King of Corſica, and certainly not the worſe for having been unfortunate, ought to have them perpetually. Thus the Geographer and Heralds of the Society, will be conſtantly at work about the *jus gentium*, and Somerſet Place continue in as great a ferment as the diet of Ratiſbon, 'till it is determined who are ſovereign princes and who are not. But this muſt not be: *traditum ab antiquis morem ſervare memento*, which being tranſlated means, no chair but the Preſident's and the two Secretaries ever ought to come into the meeting room of the Royal Society. It is the ſame ſpirit of adulation to great perſonages, which has dictated the new alterations in the liſts, in which, amidſt the truly courtly care to ſecure protection, ſupport, and forbearance for the Royal Society of London, by inſerting the *additions* of every Commiſſioner of the Cuſtoms, and Member of Parliament, who has the honour to be of the body; we cannot but admire, that it has been thought improper to print any addition after the name of the ſurgeons. As to Mr. Nairne, the inſtrument maker, though foreign academies may think the admiſſion of an eminent man in his profeſſion, does us as much honour as any admiſſion on the liſt, we can account for his profeſſion not being marked. The Preſident, (preluding, as it ſhould ſeem, to his future greatneſs) endeavoured formerly to exclude him, as well as ſeveral other learned members, from the Society. Another proof, if any was wanting, that the gentleman now in the chair, however qualified, or whatever his merits of another kind may be, has not the ideas proper for a Preſident of the Royal Society, and that he never will have them.

Two words more, and we have done.—Much has been ſaid of the Preſident's attachment to the intereſts of the Royal Society, as far as his abilities will allow him to ſee them (nobody has ſpoken of him as a lynx) and of his nice attention to the management of our finances. Neither of theſe qualifications we mean abſolutely to deny him; for, though the two worſt papers in the Tranſactions of the four laſt years—papers

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very expenſive in the publication, and certainly no ornament to the volume—were written by the Preſident's friends, and have been publiſhed ſolely out of compliment to him; and though the ſending Mr. Nairne, who had taken a decided part in the controverſy about conductors, at all to Heckingham was an *imprudent*, and the ſending him as *ſecond* to Dr. Blagden, was an *improper* ſtep, we are willing to attribute them both to thoſe little partialities inſeparable, perhaps, from the condition of human nature, and which we ſhould even diſdain to remark in one who did not plume himſelf ſo much on diſdaining jobs. We allow then that our finances have been well managed (not better managed than they were by Sir John Pringle) we grant our Preſident the praiſe of being attentive in his attendance and ſolicitous to do us good (not more attentive, nor more ſolicitous than Sir J. Pringle was)—But what then? We have not written thus far to diſſemble what we think. Sir Joſ. Banks *might* make a very good Clerk, a very good Attorney, or even a very good Treaſurer to the Society; but the man who is to fill the place of Preſident, ſhould be ſomething more. As to the procuring more papers, better papers than other Preſidents have done, though poſſibly ſome ſlight praiſe is to be beſtowed upon the hoſpitality that has aimed at this (God forbid that we ſhould ſeriouſly detract from this hoſpitality any more than from the *love* of ſcience, or any other praiſe-worthy quality the Preſident may poſſeſs); nobody will tell us that it is owing ſolely to this hoſpitality. Surely the papers of Meſſ. Cavendiſh, Kirwan, and Herſchell; of Dr. Maſkelyne, Dr. Hutton, and Mr. Wales; of Mr. Vince, Dr. Waring, Mr. Hunter, and Mr. Maſeres; (and take theſe away, what ſo great remains?) would have been produced, though there had been no breakfaſts in Soho Square, and though it had not been known that Sir Joſeph Banks wiſhed the Society ſhould have many papers. And *who knows*, after all, (we ſpeak upon more than conjecture) how many papers have been ſtifled, and how many *ſubjects* of ſcience have been diſcouraged, by the ſame caprice and love of dominion, which has dictated ſo many other innovations. One thing *we* know, that to affect a high contempt for ſome very good foreign papers (viſible in the caſes of Abbé Fontana and Dr. Ingenhouz) and to make himſelf the tribunal by which all papers are to be judged, before they are offered to the tribunal of the Society, is not the way, cannot be the way, to procure many papers. But once more, it is for higher objects we contend, and of delinquency in higher objects we accuſe. The Royal Society *was* a *Society*; we do not wiſh to ſee it a *monarchy*; it *did* conduct itſelf according to the rules of juſtice and equity; we deſire it may not violate thoſe rules; its principles *were*, that the firſt diſtinction of men is virtue, and the ſecond learning; we cannot bear that

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birth ſhould take rank with either of theſe. Now, the Preſident does think that it ought, and *therefore* it is proper to look out for one, who, with Sir Joſeph Banks's merits, be thoſe merits what they may, does not think ſo. No Fellow of the Society will inſult the Society or himſelf ſo much, as to ſuppoſe for an inſtant, that ſuch a Preſident is not to be found, if we ſeriouſly ſeek for him. Perhaps, indeed, it would become ſuch an one, *to offer himſelf to reſcue us*: perhaps it would ultimately redound to his laſting honour, notwithſtanding the clamour the *poliſhed* part of the town might perhaps at firſt raiſe againſt him, if he did offer; but if he does not, let once a hundred of us aſſociate, and offer ourſelves to be reſcued, and no doubt twenty perſons, will be glad to accept the honourable office.

To conclude, ſome gentlemen, for whoſe opinions we have real and great deference, ſeem to think, that, whatever ſide may be in the right, the dignity of the Society is committed by publications of the nature of the preſent. That the dignity of a body conſiſting of five hundred members, and dependant for its real dignity on the merit of its annual publication, and on that alone, ſhould be committed by any thing which a few individuals, themſelves reſponſible for what they publiſh, can write, is a doctrine in our eyes unphiloſophical, and not to be maintained. However high ſome privileged beings amongſt us may ſoar, or think they ſoar, Charles the Second gave no charter to exempt us all from the common frailties of humanity, nor does philoſophy herſelf (one arrogant and impious philoſophy alone excepted) affect to ſet her votaries ſo far above the ordinary condition of mankind, as to keep them ever exempt from the common feelings and common reſentment of the ſpecies. But if it were ſo, the wrong reſts not with us, who have only come forward to heal, or, if not to heal, at leaſt to prevent the enlarging of wounds, which would, alas! receive no gentler medicine. If *indeed* the dignity of the Society has been committed, and if our learned brethren of Europe, have *indeed* reaſon to lament, that we ſtand no longer on that high eminence where they loved to ſee us; it was then committed, when, for the firſt time, and with a fatal example to literature, an example that has been but too much followed, we ſuffered our chair, which ever before had been offered to unaſſuming modeſty, to be claimed and publicly canvaſſed for through this great town; it was committed when we received into that chair, the chair of Newton, a gentleman who had not publiſhed a ſingle line in our Tranſactions, nor given any ſign of literary merit, but what might have been given by one of the humbleſt of the votaries of the humbleſt of the ſciences; it was committed when

we ſent forth to Europe, at the head of our learned volume, a ſpeech of that gentleman, deficient in Engliſh, deficient in grammar, deficient in idea, full of fulſome and undignified adulation of ourſelves, mean and inadequate in expreſſions of reſpect and gratitude, where the higheſt reſpect and gratitude is due. The dignity of the Society was committed, when we ſat patiently by, and ſaw that gentleman encouraging the very diſorders he was elected to reſtrain, At one time voting in his own cauſe; at another, affecting not to count the balls in a queſtion which was going againſt him*; a third, taking the ſenſe of the body, in direct oppoſition to a poſitive ſtatute, by

* On a queſtion moved by Sir Henry Englefield, without the knowledge of any profeſſed member of the oppoſition, to inſert in imitation of other academies, in the volumes of the Tranſactions, the names of the perſons who gained the Society's medal. Whether Sir Henry thought that abuſes had exiſted, which would by this means be corrected, and that L'Abbé Fontana and Dr. Ingenhouz, (great deſpiſers of imaginary diſtinctions and literary charlatans,) had been particularly ill-uſed by not having it given to them, is more than can be ſaid; but it is certain that Sir Joſeph Banks was deſired by one of his intimate friends, on the very morning the queſtion was to be debated in the Society, to let the Council do what Sir Henry aſked, and that he refuſed it.—He will tell the world, whether it was for the purpoſe of ſtopping uſeleſs and unprofitable debates, in which he has ſo admirably ſucceeded. On this occaſion, however, the debate, profitable or unprofitable, went againſt him; for Sir Henry carried the queſtion by a great majority, though Sir Joſeph was then in the plenitude of his power; but, ſtrange to tell! though the queſtion was carried four months ago, the Council have as yet made no order in the buſineſs. Is this perſevering in the ſupport of claims that cannot be ſupported, or is it not? Surely, a conciliating and moderate-minded man, would not only have *directly* ſeized this occaſion of ſeeming to yield a little to the declared ſenſe of the body; but he would have anticipated their deſires, and been himſelf the mover to take a freſh opinion of Council concerning the right of nomination to the place of Foreign Secretary, which he could not but be ſenſible was not only a point very likely to be diſputed, but a very diſputable point. Yet Sir Joſeph will be ſurprized, and inveigh againſt thoſe who conſume the time of the Society in frivolous and unprofitable debates, when at the very next meeting of the Society the Secretary receives, as he certainly will, a motion ſigned for the purpoſe of recommending to the next year's Council, immediately to take this opinion.—As to this whole quarrel with the Foreign Secretary, it appears ſo thoroughly ridiculous, that one would hardly think new circumſtances could come out to make it more ſo; and yet, ſtrange to tell! there are ſuch. An iniquitous law was made, that Dr. Hutton ſhould not reſide at Woolwich, and lo! his immediate ſucceſſor reſides near Chelſea: Dr. Hutton was held up as a negligent man, for not having anſwered an inſignificant letter of Mr. Bonnet; and, for aught that appears upon our books, *where the Preſident himſelf ordered that it ſhould appear*, the Margrave of Anſpach's letter, accompanying a moſt ſplendid preſent, has never been anſwered.—O conſiſtent ſpirit of inconſiſtency, how harmonious are all thy bleſſed operations!

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tumultuous acclamation †; clinging, in ſhort, like a polypus, to every one of his uſurpations; and never (which has driven us to this harſh neceſſity) never at any one period of the long nine months the conteſt has now laſted, acknowledging that he *might* be miſtaken, promiſing that he would amend; or even ſoliciting a friendly conference of the two parties, authoritatively to ſettle what might be amiſs. Finally, our dignity has been eſſentially committed, by ſome of us perſiſting, againſt every admonition, and by every artifice perſiſting, to ſupport acts which it is one of the firſt and darling diſtinctions of ſcience to abhor and repreſs, acts of arrogance, acts of injuſtice, acts of inhumanity. Theſe are our real humiliations; theſe are the true cauſes, that point the unlearned finger at us: To aim at the cure of ſuch evils, can leſſon the dignity of no man, or ſet of men.—On the contrary, it is to the honour of our natures that we have felt, it will long continue our boaſt and conſolation that we have endeavoured to redreſs, them.

† When upon the "Hiſtory of the Debates and Diſſentions," being preſented to the Society, the Preſident poſitively refuſed to put the queſtion, whether thanks ſhould be returned for it or not, and even, when Mr. Baron Maſeres, declaring his diſapprobation of the motion made by Dr. Horſley, for thoſe thanks (though he approved the contents of the *Authentic Narrative* itſelf,) endeavoured to get rid of it by moving the previous queſtion, and was ſeconded in that motion by Dr. Maſkelyne; the Preſident refuſed likewiſe to put that queſtion, though he was almoſt certain that it would have been carried in his favour, by a prodigious majority. Can there be greater ignorance in a chairman than not to know that the *only* way to gather the ſenſe of a body on a meaſure, is to put a queſtion; and can there be a greater proof of the madneſs of party, than that grave and learned men ſhould have abetted this ignorance?

P. S. Since this ſheet has been ſent to preſs, the following paragraph has appeared in all the public papers.

"Yeſterday, Major Deſbarres kiſſed his Majeſty's hand, on being appointed Governor of Nova Scotia." This reward, we hear, has been conferred on this able and ſpirited officer—for great national ſervices—in recompence of much time and much money—for having ſaved, by his *philoſophical* labours, many of the King's ſhips, and the lives of many of our fellow ſubjects. What will the *Royal* Society of London, inſtituted for the promotion of natural knowledge, do now? will it chooſe this rival of Cook, this ſucceſſor of Halley, if he ſhould condeſcend to offer, or will it *ſupport the chair*, follow up the blow, and becauſe it has been in the wrong once, determine to be in the wrong for ever? The eyes of Europe are upon us, and we are called upon to correct what we have done amiſs.

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